

Salisbury (Sarah W.)

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE,

Delivered Nov. 8, 1860,

BEFORE THE

LADIES' MEDICAL ACADEMY,

At the opening of the Second Term.

By SARAH W. SALISBURY, M.D.,

PROFESSOR OF ANATOMY.

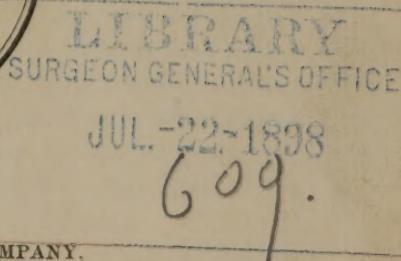


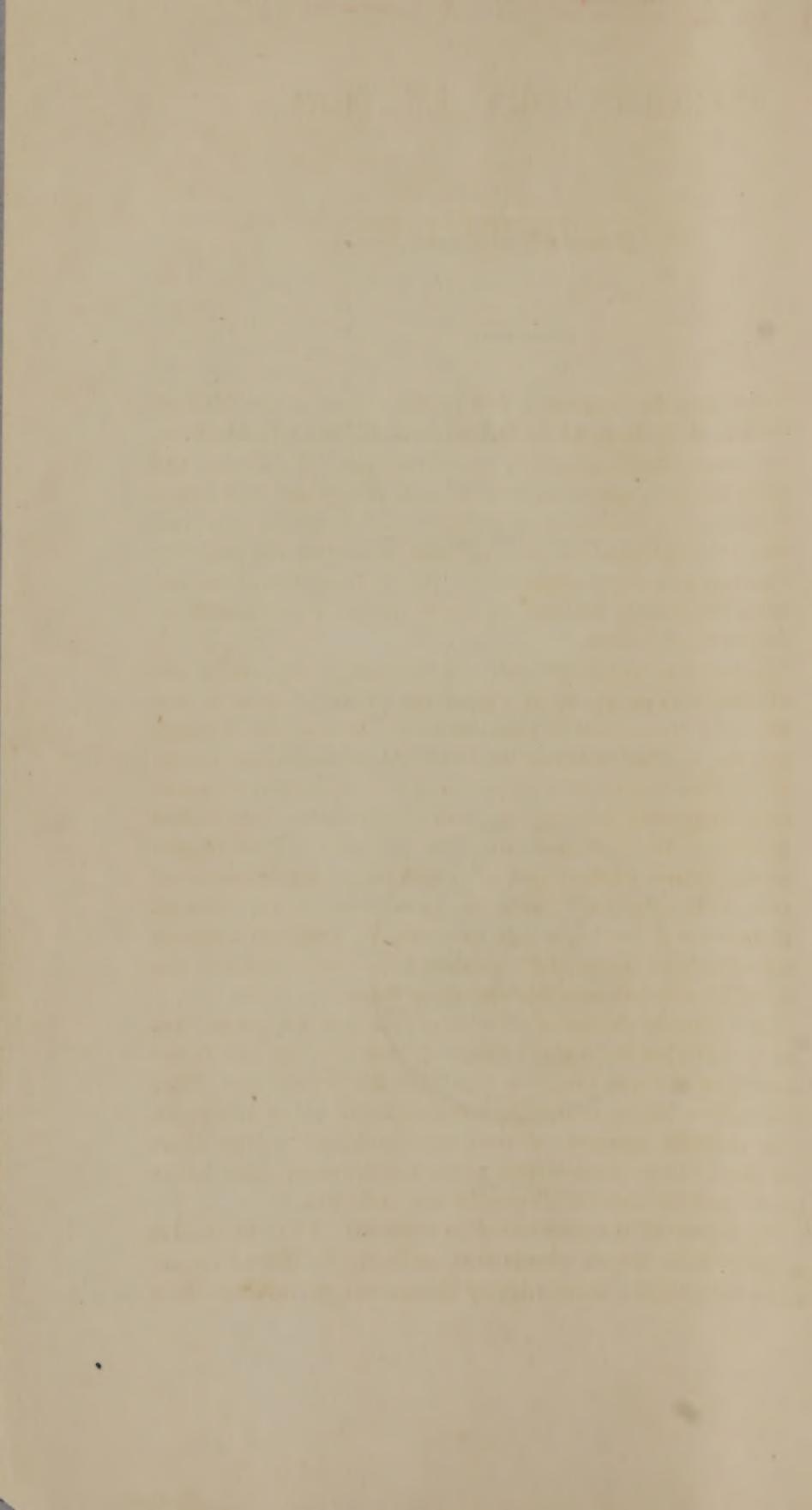
BOSTON:

PRINTED BY RIPLEY AND COMPANY,

15, CONGRESS STREET.

1861.





LECTURE.

NOTHING but the interest I feel in the cause of the Medical Education of Women, and a desire to do all I can to promote it, would induce me thus publicly to address you. I need not tell you that the presence of so many friends cheers and encourages us; it seems to tell us that many hearts beat in unison in a good cause. But while we bid you welcome, we regret our inability to entertain you as we could wish. We feel confident, however, that you are friends, and will be ready to throw the mantle of charity over all defects.

The occasion which has called us together is necessarily one of interest to those about to attend the present course of lectures; and I think there is much to render it so to all. Though only a few of the audience are students of medicine, yet all should feel an interest in a subject which so intimately concerns them as their own health. No unworthy motives have called us together. We meet here simply to welcome a class of students to a course of medical study; and to call the attention of women to the claims the world has upon them as the mothers and educators of our race, that they may be prepared to meet those claims and to faithfully discharge the duties which in the order of Providence may devolve upon them.

The "LADIES' MEDICAL ACADEMY," as you are aware, has been in operation but a short time. A year ago, the first Introductory Lecture was given in this Hall by Dr. Brown. Thus far its success has more than met the expectations of its friends. It has enrolled upwards of forty students; and, as the doors have usually been thrown open to the public, many other ladies have favored us with their presence and influence.

The object of the institution is twofold. First, to furnish the public with female physicians; secondly, to diffuse among women in general a knowledge of themselves, to instruct them

how to keep what health they have, and how to get more; in other words, to investigate the laws of life and health, and suggest the best means of their practical application.

Young women who are preparing themselves for the teacher's vocation will find here a cordial welcome. Attendance on one or two courses of lectures, aided by anatomical and chemical preparations, will greatly facilitate the study of physiology, a knowledge of which is now legally required of school teachers in Massachusetts.

Nurses of the sick will receive special attention, as lessons will be given in this department. Nursing is a highly useful employment, and we are anxious to make it as honorable as it is useful by raising the standard of their education.

There is also in connection with the institution a DISPENSARY, which serves as a substitute for hospital practice, by affording pupils opportunity of gaining practical knowledge in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases, and at the same time furnishes the poor with medical assistance.

As the happiness of a community depends in a great measure on the health of its members, and as the health of the young is entrusted mainly to women, we therefore, with a deep conviction of its importance, dedicate this institution to women. We earnestly commend it to your favor and support. It is more especially designed to promote your welfare, and upon your aid and influence must its success in a great measure depend. The institution is in its infancy; but we regard it as a child of promise, and, by the fostering care of its friends, we trust it is destined to live, and grow in favor with both God and man.

The present is an age of improvement, the greatest perhaps the world has ever seen. It is an age remarkable for the general diffusion of knowledge among all classes of society. The progress of science, art, and literature has equalled that of Greece or Rome in their palmiest days. It is an age which puts into operation the latent forces of nature, and makes them perform the labor which would otherwise fall to the lot of man. It is an age, too, which has assigned to woman an honorable position in the moral and intellectual world, and awarded her the palm in all that is elevated in thought or refined in manners. It is an achievement worthy of the age which has permitted

her to enter the domain of medicine, and given her a position on the same platform with her professional brethren.

In the progressive development of human society, questions necessarily arise which call forth discussions. These discussions usually evolve some truth which in its practical application conflicts with the views and interests of certain parties, thus producing a reaction. This circumstance should neither surprise nor annoy us, for it ever has been so, and ever will be, as long as human nature is susceptible of improvement. The early part of the present century gave rise to warm discussions in regard to the propriety of giving woman an intellectual education. It was urged that learning would beget a dominant spirit and a masculine boldness; that the cultivation of the mind would detract from the merits of the heart. The question was discussed *pro* and *con* both by the pen and tongue; but the prejudices which regarded it as improper or unsafe to give her such an education gradually yielded to the influence of truth. The halls of learning have been opened to her, and it is found that she can successfully compete with her gifted brother, and advance side by side with him to gather the flowers and fruit which grow high on the hill of science. And now at the present day, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, another question arises in regard to giving women a medical education, and, strange as it may appear, our opponents bring up the same old objections,—her inability, and the impropriety of her practising the healing art.

Ladies, do not stop to call a convention to debate the question of woman's ability, but set yourselves to work in right good earnest, and give the world a practical illustration of your ability both to acquire knowledge and to apply it for the relief of the sick and suffering. The scale is already turning in favor of medical education; and woman is under deep obligation to those who have been instrumental in elevating her to the position she now occupies, and especially to those physicians who have dared to extend to her the right hand of fellowship, and receive her as a co-worker in the cause of humanity and benevolence. We are not indifferent observers of the sacrifices they have made. They have encountered the prejudices of the community, the frowns and sneers of their professional brethren; but they have persevered in pressing their claim to a medical

education, until woman is now placed within the precincts of the profession by legislative sanction. For these noble deeds they will have the tribute of grateful hearts, so long as there are women who know how to appreciate moral courage, and, what is more, they will have the consolation of a good conscience and the approbation of Heaven.

It is not to be expected that every lady who gives attention to medical studies intends to become a practising physician. The knowledge which appertains to health comes within the limits of medical science. It may not be amiss to remark here that the science of medicine, so called, is in fact the summation of all science. It may be compared to a magnificent river, into which all other sciences, as tributaries, pour their contents. It includes a knowledge of human beings in all their gradations, in the savage, civilized, and enlightened states, in their various conditions of health and disease, their physical and metaphysical relation to each other and to things external, as soil, climate, and productions. Hence we perceive that it encircles within its horizon the whole moral, intellectual, and physical world.

Medical science may be considered as comprising two departments,—the preventive and the curative. The former includes a knowledge of human beings in a state of health, and the conditions of its preservation in that state. It has reference to that part of medicine termed by the English the prophylactic, and by the French the *hygeanie*. It comprises a knowledge of structure and function, or, in other words, of Anatomy and Physiology, at least so far as these are essential to the preservation of health. The term *hygiene* is of Greek origin. Hygeia was the daughter of Hygeus, and, in heathen mythology, the goddess of health. The curative department has reference to the body in its diseased condition. It includes Pathology, Therapeutics, Materia Medica, Surgery, and the various collateral branches, as Botany, Chemistry, &c.

A knowledge of the branches of both these departments is essential to the professional student. She is expected to become as familiar with the details of Anatomy and Physiology, and the technical terms of medical science, as with household words; but these minutiae might encumber the student's memory, to the exclusion of practical truths relating to the laws of health and the mode of their application. It is not our intention to point

you to the medicine chest, but to those immutable laws, in the keeping of which lies the grand secret of health. It is a fact well known to those who are initiated into the secrets of medicine, that those who observe these laws seldom need a physician, while those who disregard them cannot long enjoy health, let them employ as many physicians as they please.

I would not say aught to discourage any one from drinking deep at the fountain of medical lore; but to those who do not intend to practise the healing art, and only design to become familiar with their own organization for purposes of self-preservation, I would say, Be careful how you tamper with medicine. It takes a really skilful physician to know when to give medicine and when to withhold it. Nature herself is a good physician, and, like a good housekeeper, can generally do her work better without the help of servants than with it. Disease is not, as many imagine, something to be driven out of the system by medicine, but it is a condition to be changed by removing the cause. As health answers to the normal condition of life, so disease answers to the abnormal. In the former we see the beautiful effects of harmonious action, producing that fulness of life which we term health; in the latter, the sad results of discordant action termed disease.

There is no royal road to health. Like every other blessing, it requires constant care to preserve it. In the language of Dr. Alcott, the body is "the house we live in"; and if we would render the immortal tenant comfortable while he sojourns in this house of clay we must see to it that it be kept in good repair. If we would preserve the gem, we must take due care of the casket.

Female medical education has taken deep root in the common sense of an enlightened public, and whoever takes a view of the subject from the right stand-point cannot fail to see its beauty and utility. They will perceive that it embodies the true idea of woman's mission, inasmuch as it looks to the practical duties of her life. I know there are those who pretend to regard it as a retrograde step, which will neither benefit society nor enhance the delicacy or purity of female character; but their vision is dimmed by prejudice. They belong to that class who, as Dr. Watts would say, look with jaundiced eyes, and consequently make yellow observations. Those who attach ideas of

impurity or indelicacy to the study or practice of the healing art have yet to learn that their views of propriety are not in accordance with virtue and truth. The highest study of mankind is man. So thought the sages of antiquity, as well as those of the present day. Man has ever been a wonder to himself; and the more he studies the intricate mechanism of human organization the more he sees to excite his admiration.

But to return. The care of the body in sickness and infancy devolves upon woman. This is her honorable prerogative, and well worthy her highest ambition. She is destined to take the infant in its helplessness, to rear the physical system upon which the vigor of the mind so much depends; in short, so to train up the child as to fulfil the intention of its Creator. As a tree retains the marks made upon it when a sapling, so the impressions made in early life are as lasting.

It would seem that no question could arise in regard to the propriety of giving to females those advantages which will enable them to discharge the duties that in the order of Providence may devolve upon them. But the young woman enters upon the most responsible duties of life with little or no preparation. She assumes the maternal responsibilities without a knowledge of those laws which would ensure health to herself, and to her offspring a vigorous constitution. The effect of such ignorance is realized in the distress which parents experience in seeing their children cut off by early death, or suffering from a feeble constitution. We require of a person who makes an article of apparel some knowledge of the business she assumes. We do not apply to a milliner to cut our garments, nor to a blacksmith to repair a watch; but, in the latter case, to one who understands its mechanism, who sees from what cause the disorder arises, and knows just what to do to put the machine in order.

Among the various diseases which afflict the human family, it is probable that very few originate from defective organization, but the great majority result from the vices and follies of mankind. No constitution is endowed with the power of maintaining its vitality for an indefinite length of time. Neither is every constitution alike in this respect, but each possesses a certain amount of vital power, which would keep the body in health and vigor for a long time, but at last becomes exhausted and dies out, as a taper when all the oil is consumed. Were it

not for the degenerating effect of hurtful influences, mankind would be today as free from disease as the wild animals that roam unharmed by man's perverted reason or his scientific investigations.

In civilized society, very few enjoy firm health; the greater part labor under some physical infirmity. It is estimated that one-half of the human species perish in infancy; and probably one-half of those who survive this period do not attain maturity, leaving but one-fourth to live on to advanced age. Perhaps it would be impossible to determine what proportion of these die from unavoidable diseases. Infants and children are liable to infectious as well as hereditary diseases; but we may reasonably conclude that the greater number of early deaths may be traced to preventable causes.

There is in general no lack of natural ability on the part of mothers, but a want of practical domestic training. More is thought of the shadow than the substance, more of show and ornament than of solid acquirements. More duties, I am informed, are paid on artificial flowers than on railroad iron. The last novel, the latest fashion, a little drawing, painting, and music, are reckoned of sufficient importance to take the place of those solid acquirements so essential to the faithful discharge of the duties of life. If a mother were to write down a list of her duties, health for herself and health for her family should stand at the head of the catalogue. It should be written upon the tablets of her heart, and inscribed on the door-posts of her dwelling. Most parents are anxious to lay up for their children the wealth of this world; but if they would lay up for them a firm constitution and a stock of health, it would be to them a treasure richer far than the gold of California or the gems of Golconda. They may leave them gold and silver; but there is danger that it may prove a curse rather than a blessing. It may take away the stimulus to exertion, the restraints to indulgence, and by so doing it may take "wisdom out of the head, virtue out of the heart, and strength out of the muscles."

It is safe to conclude that health and longevity are the natural conditions of life; but they depend on the observance of immutable laws: consequently man would enjoy uninterrupted health if nothing interfered with the operation of these laws. It is true, man is destined to die; but there is no proof that he

is destined to die from disease. It is supposed that we would decline gradually, and without pain, even as a candle goes out in its socket. "God made man upright, but he has sought out many inventions." He created him in His own image, capable of understanding and obeying the laws which would give him health and length of days; but his understanding is perverted, he sees "as through a glass darkly," both as regards the present life and the future. How far, think you, would we be obliged to go to find ladies, even at the present day, who regard it as a mark of gentility to look delicate, and therefore take pride in being "out of health"? Such persons give but little heed to their condition until it is too late, and then they will run hither and thither in search of health, swallow any amount of medicine, and at last sink into an untimely grave, dug by their own imprudence.

It is a curious manifestation of human folly, to see mankind clinging to life with such a tenacious grasp when it is too late, and yet so indifferent while it is in their power to preserve it. It is true that there are thousands in this degenerate age whose natural constitution falls below the standard. Such people cannot enjoy that fulness of life and health which falls to the lot of the more robust; but they may fortify their natural constitution, and enjoy that measure of health which they are capable of receiving, by a strict observance of sanitary laws.

I am aware that a belief prevails that our diseases are sent upon us irrespective of natural laws. They are regarded as mysterious providences, over which man has no control. But those who understand the relation which man sustains to the material universe perceive that these so called providences are the effects of causes which God has ordained, or, in other words, the result of his established laws. All the mystery about them arises from the mist of ignorance which obscures human vision. Man being ignorant of the laws which govern the living organism, is easily led into this error. It is a law in nature that fire shall burn; but there is no law which requires that a person shall put his fingers into the fire. If he does so, he must suffer the penalty which the violation of that law inflicts. Suppose, for instance, a man from excess in eating or drinking brings on a disease which terminates in death; or suppose a person in health goes out from a heated room in a state of perspiration,

and exposes himself to the cold north wind, and in consequence the blood is thrown upon some of the internal organs, producing a fever, of which he dies. Does not such an individual cause his own death as much as a person who commits suicide by means of a rope or a razor? Yes, say you, but both are not equally guilty: in the one case there was intention to take life, and in the other there was not, and guilt lies in the intention or motive. We admit this; but as regards physical law both are equally transgressors, and both receive the same penalty — death. The design in the one case to take life is not subject to organic law. It was a mental act, and subject to the law of mind, not matter. He who intentionally takes his own life is doubly guilty; for he violates two laws of his being, physical and mental.

The laws which appertain to the body, mind, and soul of man observe such an intimate relation that it is difficult to draw the line of demarcation. No philosopher of the past or present ages has been able fully to explain the mysterious connection of mind and matter; and it would be presumption in one to attempt it who has but just passed the threshold of medical science. Those mysterious causes which we term laws lie beneath the surface of things. We may see their effects, but the causes themselves are not so apparent. We may see the flash of the lightning and hear the roar of the thunder, we may see the wild tornado sweep everything before it, and can scarcely persuade ourselves that it results from the silent influence of the sun upon our atmosphere. We may see the fell destroyer, Consumption, sweep annually its thousands to an untimely grave; but the causes which underlie and produce the abnormal changes in the living organism are difficult to find out.

I have said that this is an age of improvement, in intellect at least. But notwithstanding the intellectual elevation of woman, notwithstanding our literary institutions are of a high order, there is much in education as it exists at the present day that is radically wrong, and this wrong strikes at the very root of all human enjoyment — health. It fails to produce a sound mind in a healthy body. Education implies the development of the whole human being. It appertains to the body, mind, and soul, each of which must receive due attention, in order that the whole be developed in its true and beautiful proportions.

Physical culture underlies all other. It is as the fountain to the stream, or as the foundation to the superstructure. The physical system attains its full growth in a very few years; but the mind may need many years to develope its powers. It is far better to defer mental culture to a later period than to rob the body of the nervous energy requisite to its full development. If the nervous energy is expended in maintaining undue activity of the mind, the bodily functions are disturbed, and ill-health follows as naturally as water runs down hill. Such a draft upon the constitution cannot long remain hidden. The precocious youth and the feeble constitutions of the rising generation are proofs of our assertion, and will be living proofs of our folly. There probably never was a time (at least in this country) when the mind was so educated at the expense of the body. Sure enough we live in a fast age. We not only learn too fast, but we eat too fast, we breathe too fast, the pulse beats too fast, and it is no wonder that we are fast becoming a race of invalids. The excited condition of the system rapidly consumes its own vitality, and people die long before the natural limit of life.

Although physical education underlies all other, it is only as a means to higher development, for upon this in a great measure depends the health and vigor of the moral and intellectual powers. The great want of the age is *symmetrical* culture, or, in other words, a better physical culture in connection with mental and moral training. Physical culture was well understood by some of the nations of antiquity, especially by the Greeks and Romans. They had their gymnasia and athletic sports; consequently the youth of both sexes became hardy and vigorous, capable of enduring great fatigue and hardship. But the motive which prompted them to adopt a course of physical training seems to have had its origin in the selfish element of human nature. It was their highest ambition to become victorious in war and a terror to their enemies. They had a burning desire for that fame which Mars brings his votaries. War and Victory were their watchwords; while Justice and Love,—those precious elements of the moral nature,—lay dormant in the recesses of the heart. The women also partook of the same spirit. Mothers would hush their infants to sleep, singing of wars, of heroes, and of victory. The powers of the mind were in keeping with those of the body. The intellectual

faculties were highly cultivated; they excelled in literature, in science, and art; and their power was felt throughout the earth; yet they fell, because their system was defective in moral culture. The Spartan youth who concealed the stolen fox under his cloak, and at the same time persisted in his innocence even while the fox was eating into his vitals, affords an example of the views the ancients had of virtuous conduct. Theft was regarded as a virtue; and the youth who could practise intrigue and escape detection was deemed worthy of the highest praise. Thus, in casting our eye over the history of nations, we see the lower propensities of our nature developed in an undue degree. The Egyptian, the Greek, and the Roman each had a body and mind highly developed; yet it was not until after Christianity shed its benign influence that the powers of the heart and soul were called out, which previous to this had lain nearly dormant. It is true, there may be found isolated cases where nature and circumstances have co-operated to produce a full development of body, mind, and soul. We need not go out of our own country for examples. In a WASHINGTON we see a noble heart prompt, a mighty intellect direct, and an iron constitution execute, the purposes he undertook. What would the noble heart of FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE have availed the poor soldiers in the Crimea, had she not possessed a large fund of the nerve and muscle of endurance?

From these considerations it will be conceded that the full development of the human being is requisite to bring mankind up to the highest standard. It does not consist in intellectual power alone, nor in literature, science, or arts, though these may dignify and adorn it; neither does it consist in the physical powers alone: but in the moral element, enlightened by the intellect, and rendered efficient by the strength of the physical system.

I am aware it is an easy matter to point out existing evils; but to trace them to their source and remove their cause is no easy task. The evils to which we have alluded may be traced not only to a wilful disregard of Nature's laws, but to the ignorance which everywhere prevails on the subjects of life and health. Could the grave speak, would it not reveal to the world that its victories have been achieved mainly through the ignorance of mankind in regard to these laws? Would it not

proclaim to mankind that the great end of life can never be attained until we give heed to the precept, "Know thyself." This injunction applies to all, and is as binding upon every one as a command of the Decalogue. The author of it speaks to us today in tones as distinct as those uttered from Mount Sinai.

KNOW THYSELF. There are probably no two words in our language which embody an idea of so much import. Know that man is a compound being; that he has a moral, spiritual, intellectual, and physical nature, each of which requires a culture suited to itself. It shows us that man sustains in this life three important relations. The first and most important is that which he sustains to his Creator, the second to his fellow-man, and the third to external objects. To know these relations, and to perform the duties which grow out of them, should be the great aim of life. Whoever does this answers the purpose for which he was created.

It has been said that coming events cast their shadows before; and in the achievements of the present which give to woman the advantages of a medical education and to the rising generation a knowledge of the laws of health, we see the precursor of a medical millenium which will ultimately lead to that more glorious future predicted by the Prophets. In that better time coming the earth itself will remain unchanged, the stars will shine with no more brilliancy, the moon will pour forth no extra light, nor will the sun shine with greater splendour. Yet there will be a change, and that change will be essentially in man himself, in the keeping of those laws which have been instituted for his good, or rather in the conformity of heart and life to the will of God.

It is to be lamented that the science of medicine, and all that appertains to the physical well-being of mankind, should have been kept at such a distance from common observation. The veil which hangs over medicine not only gives it a suspicious look, but serves as a screen to a host of impostors, whose sole object is to make money by imposing on the credulity of mankind. Far better would it be if the preventive department of medicine devolved more on the physician; but, as the customs of society now are, he is debarred from exercising his highest prerogative. If he should devote his time to keeping people from being sick, he would cut off his own livelihood,

which depends upon the incompetency of people to take care of their health. This condition of things is to be deplored, more, perhaps, by physicians themselves than by any other class in the community. They are surrounded by circumstances over which they have but little control, and which impel them to travel on in the beaten track. I am not inclined to censure the good physician. He has spent his time and money to acquire a knowledge of the healing art, and who is there more worthy of a fair compensation? He has not a moment that he may call his own. Like a minute-man, he is expected to be ready night or day to do the bidding of his employers. The blame which seems to attach to physicians is without doubt more the fault of the people, or should be set down to the customs of society. Ask any respectable physician if he is satisfied with the popular ignorance on the subject of health. Does he not lament that his own pecuniary interest and the sanitary welfare of mankind antagonize? In a word, would he not rejoice to see the Doctor of Medicine placed on the same platform with the Doctor of Divinity, receiving like him a salary for his services. We hope the time is not far distant when the physician's claims will be better considered, when he will receive from the public treasury a fair compensation not merely for curing diseases but for preventing them, and thus become in the fullest sense of the term what his M.D. justly entitles him, a teacher of medicine and a public benefactor.

Ladies, you are about to engage in a great and good cause. It requires no small share of moral courage to come out from the world and engage in an unpopular enterprise; but having chosen the right way, dare to pursue it. In the language of Scripture, "Who is he that can harm you, if ye follow that which is good?" I need scarcely remind you, that the profession on the one hand and the public on the other are looking with anxious eyes on this movement. The darkened brow of the former and the propitious look of the latter indicate plainly the feelings they cherish towards you; but let none of these things move you. Let your motto be "Excelsior." An arrow aimed at the sun may rise higher than if aimed low.

The medical education of woman marks a "golden era" in her history. It presents a broad field for the exercise of her intellect, and opens the way to competence, influence, and

honor. These considerations may have a tendency to induce some to enter the profession who do not possess the necessary qualifications. Those who enter at an age when the mind has partially lost its relish for study cannot expect to attain that eminence which is desirable, or which the present wants of the community demand. The medical student should have an ardent love for scientific investigation, as well as a taste for the duties of a practising physician. Not only a vigorous mind but firm health is requisite in order to encounter the hardships attendant on medical practice. It is desirable to receive students directly from the schools, with minds invigorated by mental training, and before they are encumbered with the active duties of life. If, ladies, to native ability you add a good medical education, you will honor your profession and spread around it a halo which will command the respect of the community. We do not expect your motives to be entirely unselfish. That would be unreasonable. The desire for money, to a certain extent, is compatible with the most lovely traits of character; and it should have its appropriate place, subservient to higher motives. Not only a desire for gain, but for honor and position in society, is natural, and if kept within due limits is not to be condemned.

But the honors to which you aspire are not to be gained without personal effort. "The gods give nothing valuable to men without great labor." This saying of a heathen philosopher applies equally to you. Do not suppose that you have only to listen to two or three courses of medical lectures, and get a diploma, which will serve as a passport to the confidence of the public. You will need all the aid which can be derived from lecturers, from books, and from the bedside of the sick. Your instructors may present ideas to your mind, but they will vanish like objects seen in twilight unless there be also effort on your part. They may select and prepare your intellectual food with the greatest care, but they cannot assimilate it for you. As the food of the body must undergo several processes before it can be converted into the various organs and tissues, so the mental food must be properly digested before it can become a part of your intellectual self. Teachers may smooth the path and remove obstacles which lie in your way; but the knowledge acquired in the lecture-room should not take the place of study

You should mark out a course of study, and pursue it in a truth-seeking spirit. It would be well to bear in mind the sentiment expressed by Dr. Watts,—

“Go search for truth wherever found,
On Christian or on heathen ground.
The plant’s divine where’er it grows,
Neglect the prickles and assume the rose.”

The student will need nice discriminating powers to distinguish between what is true and false in science and practice. She should examine the different methods of practice, deduce logically, and receive nothing as truth until fairly convinced. Ladies, you have foes from within as well as from without. Your prejudices in favor of or against a particular method of practice will prove a great obstacle in your way, if adhered to. How many, think you, would be admitted into a medical school if they were required, as in a court of justice, not to have prejudged the case? Let me then advise you to defer judgment until you have examined the different pathies and isms. Try to become a worker that needeth not to be ashamed, and you will require no hobby to gain popular favor. The whole world will be your *materia medica*, and the concentrated wisdom of past ages your guide. You will learn that many of the opinions of the past, by the light of advancing science, are now shown to be erroneous; and we should remember that those who held these opinions were as positive as we are in regard to our own. This consideration should moderate our enthusiasm, and keep our minds open to the truth, with a resolve to follow in whatever direction she may turn.

The philosophic method of investigating medical science which has been recently adopted cannot fail to lead us aright, if judiciously pursued. It needs but a glance at the subject to convince us of the importance of pursuing a systematic course of study. It would be sheer folly to require a student to work out a problem in fractions or proportion who had not mastered the fundamental rules of arithmetic; and it would be quite as unreasonable to expect the medical student to understand Pathology without a previous knowledge of Anatomy and Physiology, for these form the basis of the whole.

In entering upon the duties which devolve upon the chair of

Anatomy, I feel deeply sensible of the responsibility which rests upon me. Be assured, ladies, that it will be my highest pleasure to aid you in the great work of preparation; but, let me say, I am decidedly opposed to that method of instruction which relieves the student of mental labor. However fashionable it may be to listen to some half-dozen lectures in a day, it is not a judicious course. The goddess Fashion sways her sceptre in the medical world as everywhere else, and the votaries obey her mandates, however unreasonable they may be. It is not the abundance of words you hear, but what you understand and retain, that adds to your intellectual store. Lectures are designed to afford explanations and to enable you to pursue your studies understandingly, not to relieve you of mental labor.

The subject of every lecture should be known and studied by the pupil previous to its delivery, that she may note what is obscure, and be ready to hear the explanation when the point is referred to by the lecturer. She should then have time to retire and carefully write down the leading features of the lecture, for her own improvement and for reference. This method would afford an exercise in medical orthography and composition, which could be submitted to the teacher for examination.

Far be it from me to utter a word of discouragement. On the contrary, we shall endeavor to combine the useful with the agreeable. In the language of Milton, "we will straightly conduct you to a hillside, laborious indeed at the first ascent, but else so smooth, so green, so full of goodly prospects and melodious sounds on every side, the songs of Orpheus are not more charming." Yes, ladies, medical science opens to your aspiring minds a broad field. It opens to you the book of Nature; and, if entered upon with a right spirit, will bring its own reward. Here you may improve the heart as well as the mind; here you may admire the wisdom, love, and purity of that perfect Being who created and who sustains all things.

